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**From:** Agarwal, Ilena [agarwal.ilen@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 10/11/2018 7:52:59 PM  
**To:** AO OPA OMR CLIPS [AO\_OPA\_OMR\_CLIPS@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Compilation 10/11/2018

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## Bloomberg: Trump's EPA Shakes Up Science Panel That Guides Pollution Rules

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-10-10/trump-s-epa-shakes-up-science-panel-that-guides-pollution-rules>

By Jennifer A Dlouhy- October 10, 2018, 7:20 PM EDT

The Environmental Protection Agency has installed new members on a scientific advisory panel that guides the agency on air pollution -- and only one of them is an independent, academic scientist.

The seven-member Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee plays a critical role in guiding the EPA's decisions on national standards for ozone, particulate matter and other pollutants. Its responsible for reviewing studies governing air pollution and recommending whether existing national standards need to be rewritten.

EPA Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced five new members on Wednesday, calling them "highly qualified." In a statement, he cited their diverse "backgrounds in fields like toxicology, engineering, medicine, ecology and atmospheric science."

But environmentalists raised concerns with the makeup of the panel. Most of the members now hail from state agencies that have been critical of stringent national ambient air quality standards for ozone and other material.

"These are folks who are not active researchers and scientists in the field; these are people who work in state agencies," said Andrew Rosenberg, director of the Union of Concerned Scientists' Center for Science and Democracy. With the appointments, President Donald Trump's EPA is "stacking the boards" and "fixing the science advisory boards so you really only get one point of view," Rosenberg said.

The shift comes as the Trump administration remakes other expert advisory panels. Last year, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Wheeler's predecessor, imposed a policy barring committee members from also receiving agency grants -- a change that could limit conflicts of interest but also makes it harder for some academic scientists to participate.

The lone academic scientist in the group is pulmonologist Mark Frampton, a professor emeritus of medicine at the University of Rochester Medical Center, who has published research on ozone air pollution limits.

Other new members include Corey Masuca, with the Jefferson County (Alabama) Department of Health and Steven Packham with Utah's Department of Environmental Quality, and Timothy Lewis, an aquatic ecology expert with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a federal agency involved in dams, canals and other public works projects.

Another new appointee, toxicologist Sabine Lange with the Texas Council on Environmental Quality, has drawn scrutiny for a workshop on ozone three years ago that critics said downplayed the public health risks. The Environmental Defense Fund said the event undermined the public health benefits of ozone limits and Lange left out key factors in an analysis of ozone exposure.

In May, the EPA imposed new procedures for evaluating national ambient air quality standards, saying the agency should factor in economic concerns.

## Environmental Working Group: Trump's War on Children's Health Escalates at Wheeler's EPA

<https://www.ewg.org/news-and-analysis/2018/10/trump-s-war-children-s-health-escalates-wheeler-s-epa#.W793XGhKics>

By Alex Formuzis, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2018

Under President Trump, the Environmental Protection Agency has repeatedly betrayed its responsibility to safeguard the health of children. But in recent weeks, the hostile actions of the president and Andrew Wheeler, the EPA's acting administrator, have escalated into nothing less than a war on children's health.

Since early summer, the White House and Wheeler have made a barrage of decisions that will directly harm the health of America's children, including generations not yet born. Here are the ones we know about – keeping in mind that some only came to light because of journalists' investigations:

Fighting to keep legal a nerve-agent pesticide that causes brain damage in kids

One of the first decisions of the Trump EPA was former chief Scott Pruitt's scuttling of a scheduled ban of the highly toxic pesticide chlorpyrifos. The agency's own scientists said it was dangerous to children even at very low levels. Exposure to chlorpyrifos disrupts the brain's nervous system, causing tremors and diminished IQ levels in children.

The chemical agriculture and pesticide industries hailed the decision, but public health advocates, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, pleaded with the EPA to enact the ban as scheduled. On Aug. 10, a federal appeals court ruled that Pruitt's decision violated federal law and ordered the EPA to ban chlorpyrifos within 60 days.

But Wheeler and Trump are fighting back. The EPA has refused to obey the court's order. On Sept. 25, the Justice Department filed a petition on behalf of the agency, calling on the court to overturn its earlier ruling and leave chlorpyrifos legal.

Repealing the rule that reduces air pollution from neurotoxic mercury

On Sept. 30, The New York Times and The Washington Post detailed Wheeler's scheme to repeal an Obama-era rule that has cut emissions of mercury and other heavy metals, such as lead and arsenic from coal-fired power plants, by 70 percent.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin known to harm the nervous systems of children and fetuses. Mercury in the air settles in the ocean, where it is ingested by tuna and other fish. When people eat the fish, they also ingest mercury, which can be passed from mother to fetus in the womb.

Repealing the Clean Power Plan, which would have protected kids from respiratory disease

On Aug. 21, Wheeler released the Trump administration's replacement for the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan, which sought to significantly reduce dangerous, ozone-depleting pollution from power and petrochemical plants.

In 2015, the Obama EPA estimated that the Clean Power Plan could prevent between 1,500 to 3,600 premature deaths annually and 140,000 to 150,000 asthma attacks in children. Trump's EPA later increased the estimated number of preventable premature deaths to 4,500 a year.

The proposed repeal would mean 36,000 premature deaths and more than 600,000 cases of childhood respiratory disease each decade, according to Harvard University experts on the human impact of public health policies.

Dismissing EPA's top children's health official

On Sept. 25, Wheeler abruptly and with no apparent reason placed the EPA's top children's health official on administrative leave. Dr. Ruth Etzel was made to hand in her badge, key and cellphone, and sent home.

A leader in children's environmental health for 30 years, Etzel had been tapped in 2015 by President Obama to run the Office of Children's Health Protection, whose stated goal is to "ensure that all EPA actions and programs address the unique vulnerabilities of children." Her dismissal came amid rumors that the office she headed will be closed.

Sidelining Etzel is "the opening gambit in a plan by this administration to dismantle EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection," said Dr. Philip J. Landrigan, one of the nation's leading pediatric experts and the dean of global health and director of the Children's Environmental Health Center at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Refusing to adopt health-protective standards for widespread drinking water contaminants

On June 20, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, or ATSDR, released a study concluding that the "minimal risk level" for exposure to toxic fluorinated chemicals, known as PFAS, should be up to 10 times lower than the level recommended by the EPA.

Studies have linked the two most notorious PFAS chemicals, PFOA and PFOS, to reduced effectiveness of childhood vaccines, developmental defects and other serious health problems, including cancer. EWG estimates that PFAS chemicals may contaminate the drinking water of more than 100 million Americans.

The White House and the Pruitt EPA sought to block release of the ATSDR study, fearing a "public relations nightmare." Since its release, a number of states have acted to set much lower legal limits or health advisories for PFOA, PFOS and some other PFAS chemicals.

But under Wheeler, the EPA has stuck with its previously recommended level for PFOA and PFOS, which is not legally enforceable, and has issued no health guidance on other PFAS chemicals.

Ignoring the impacts of climate change on children's health

On Oct. 3, E&E News reported that the White House had removed key language documenting the heightened risks that climate change presents to children from a draft EPA proposal to repeal a rule to reduce heat-trapping chemicals leaking into the atmosphere. Among the passages struck from the original rule from the Obama administration:

Impacts to children are expected from heat waves, air pollution, infectious and waterborne illnesses, and mental health effects resulting from extreme weather events. In addition, children are among those especially susceptible to most allergic diseases, as well as health effects associated with heat waves, storms and floods.

Once a coal lobbyist, always a coal lobbyist

Wheeler's actions came as no surprise. Before he was tapped to replace Scott Pruitt, who was forced to resign in disgrace, Wheeler was a top lobbyist for the coal industry. One of his clients was coal giant Murray Energy, which paid Wheeler and his firm more than \$3 million to represent the company in Washington. Before his time as an advocate for the fossil fuel industry, Wheeler was a longtime top aide to Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., the leading climate change denier in Congress.

"In normal times, a zealous fossil fuel apologist and the top official in charge of protecting children's health from pollution would be two separate people with conflicting agendas," said EWG President Ken Cook. "But this is the Trump administration, where a former top coal lobbyist now runs the EPA."

“At every step since taking over the agency, Wheeler has done the bidding of polluters and foiled efforts to safeguard children’s health,” said Cook. “When Wheeler’s time at EPA ends, more children will be exposed to dangerous pollutants, but Wheeler will no doubt return to the warm embrace of the fossil fuel industry, with an ‘atta boy’ for a job well done.”

## Chemical Watch: US EPA round-up

11 October 2018 / PFCs, TSCA, United States

### TSCA prioritisation approach published in Federal Register

The EPA has formally published its prioritisation approach for identifying chemicals as potential candidates for TSCA risk evaluation.

The approach considers both the near-term steps for identifying the next 20 substances to be reviewed under the updated law, and the longer-term process for identifying candidates within "the larger TSCA active chemical universe".

The immediate focus will be on substances included in TSCA's 2014 work plan. In the longer-term, the goal is to organise the roughly 40,000 substances active in US commerce into 'bins' for prioritisation. Engagement with the public and transparency will be part of these processes.

The docket is open for public comment on the approach until 15 November. In addition 73 dockets are open until 1 December 2019, to submit comment on each of the work plan chemicals that are not already undergoing EPA review. A separate docket will allow the nomination of non-work plan candidates.

### Snur withdrawal notice formally published

The agency has also published in the Federal Register a withdrawal notice for a 17 August batch of 27 TSCA significant new use rules (Snurs) issued under a direct final rule.

This type of rule must be withdrawn if the EPA receives 'significant adverse comment'. Having received this, the agency is now addressing the 27 Snurs through a traditional rulemaking process.

### Michigan PFAS community engagement event held

After an initial lineup of five events this summer, the EPA added an additional PFAS community engagement event in Michigan. It took place on 5 October, in Kalamazoo.

The format of the event was a round-table discussion with various stakeholders affected by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs).

Michigan is among states that have conducted testing and identified levels of PFAS in drinking water far exceeding the EPA's recommended 70 parts per trillion (ppt) level. Among EPA officials, a PFAS action team and congressional representatives at the meeting, there were several participants dealing specifically with water issues.

Previous events on the controversial class of substances were held in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Colorado, North Carolina and Kansas as part of the EPA's PFAS action plan

## The Hill: Ad campaign target's Trump's mercury rule proposal

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/410957-ad-campaign-targets-trumps-mercury-rule-proposal>

BY TIMOTHY CAMA - 10/11/18 11:29 AM EDT 21

A new television advertising campaign frames the Trump administration's plans to change a major mercury regulation as a threat to children and pregnant women.

Moms Clean Air Force, a program of the Environmental Defense Fund, launched the television ads Thursday to push back against the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) forthcoming proposal to weaken the justification for its 2012 Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS), which regulate coal-fired power plant pollution.

After quoting a report from the American Academy of Pediatrics on the disproportionate impact to children and developing fetuses from mercury pollution, the ad says Trump and EPA chief Andrew Wheeler "Donald Trump and EPA chief Andrew Wheeler are pushing a plan that will allow more mercury pollution."

"Will your member of Congress let it happen," the ad asks.

It is planned to run for two weeks on television stations in Washington, D.C., as well as Arizona, Minnesota and Ohio. Those three states have a number of closely-watched House and Senate races next month, including races that could decide whether Democrats obtain a majority of seats in the lower chamber.

The EPA announced last week that it would soon propose to change the cost-benefit analysis justification for the mercury rule.

The Obama administration said the rule would cost about \$9 billion, with benefits about 10 times that.

But all but about \$6 million of the benefits were "co-benefits," which came from reducing other pollutions, like particulate matter and nitrogen oxides. Wheeler wants to stop counting the co-benefits, which could make the rule more expensive than its benefits and undermine its justification.

The coal industry has already complied with the rule by shutting down plants or upgrading them.

## Politico: Apprehension meets EPA reorg

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-energy/2018/10/11/apprehension-meets-epa-reorg-369572>

By KELSEY TAMBORRINO 10/11/2018 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Anthony Adragna, Eric Wolff, Darius Dixon and Annie Snider

Editor's Note: This edition of Free Morning Energy is published weekdays at 10 a.m. POLITICO Pro Energy subscribers hold exclusive early access to the newsletter each morning at 6 a.m. To learn more about POLITICO Pro's comprehensive policy intelligence coverage, policy tools and services, [click here](#).

**APPREHENSION AHEAD:** The Trump administration's plan to overhaul the makeup of its EPA — an effort sought to streamline the agency and press restart on its priorities — is being met with a sizable dose of skepticism, and even fear, among green groups and career employees. So far, as Pro's Annie Snider and Alex Guillén report this morning, the biggest changes have been to the 10 regional offices with a structure mimicking EPA headquarters in mind. And, overseeing the overall reorganization push is Chief of Operations Henry Darwin, who told POLITICO in a recent interview that "there is no denying the fact that EPA is not going to be getting bigger anytime soon."

Privately, many state regulators and even some EPA staffers say that some sort of bureaucratic overhaul is long overdue. But there's sufficient worry about the motives of an administration that prioritizes the well-being of coal and oil companies while dismissing the environmental problems like climate change. Congress would have to sign off on most changes, and last week Darwin told staff that the plan would head to the Hill soon.

"Reorganizations in and of themselves are not bad," said Joe Edgell, president of NTEU Chapter 280. "But it's important that the reorganization be geared toward improving our protection of human health and the environment, and at this point, we're not sure that all the changes we've heard about are designed with that goal in mind."

Some of the most significant changes may come at EPA's enforcement office, where Darwin says he wants to change how success is measured. Instead of focusing on how much the agency collects in fines, Darwin wants to prioritize quickly correcting violations of anti-pollution laws — an approach critics worry is too lax. "If corporations think the worst that can happen when they're caught is that they'll be hustled back into compliance, what's the incentive to stay in compliance in the first place?" asked Eric Schaeffer, executive director of the Environmental Integrity Project and a former civil enforcement chief at EPA. [Read the story here](#).

**IT'S THURSDAY MORNING!** I'm your host, Kelsey Tamborrino. Cheniere's Khary Cauthen was the first to correctly ID Warren Harding as the only president to appoint a former president to the Supreme Court — he chose William Taft. For today: Another presidential trivia question: Who is the only president with an MBA? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to [ktamborrino@politico.com](mailto:ktamborrino@politico.com), or follow us on Twitter [@kelseyam](#), [@Morning\\_Energy](#) and [@POLITICOPro](#).

**YOUR 2018 MIDTERMS HQ:** The countdown is on. Policy professionals know the 2018 midterms represent more than keeping track of winners and losers. The outcome of high-stake contests could dramatically alter the course of policymaking across the country. Go beyond election night with POLITICO Pro's 2018 Midterms HQ. [Read More](#).

**POLITICO IS PARTNERING WITH THE MILKEN INSTITUTE** to bring a special edition of the POLITICO Pulse newsletter to the Milken Institute Future of Health Summit. Written by Dan Diamond, the newsletter will take readers inside one of the most influential gatherings of global health industry leaders and innovators as they tackle today's most pressing health challenges. The newsletter will run Oct. 23-24. Sign up today to begin receiving exclusive coverage on Day One of the summit.

### BEYOND THE BELTWAY

**MICHAEL CONTINUES DESTRUCTIVE PATH:** Hurricane Michael made landfall Wednesday with 150-plus mph winds, and is expected to continue to move inland today. Duke Energy projected Wednesday that the Category 4 storm could cause



anywhere from 300,000 to 500,000 power outages this week in North Carolina and South Carolina, which are still reeling from last month's Hurricane Florence.

Approximately 42 percent of the current oil production and roughly 31 percent of the natural gas production in the Gulf of Mexico had been shut-in as of 11 a.m. Wednesday, the U.S. Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement said. The agency also said four of the 17 dynamically positioned rigs operating in the Gulf were moved out of the storm's path as a precaution. As of 6 p.m. Wednesday, about 388,000 customers in Florida, 46,000 customers in Georgia, and 45,000 customers in Alabama reported electricity outages, according to EIA data, with those numbers expected to rise.

**MONIZ STEPS OFF SAUDI PROJECT AMID JOURNALIST PROBE:** The Trump administration is facing pressure to investigate the fate of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a U.S. resident who hasn't been seen since he entered a Saudi consulate in Istanbul more than a week ago. The concern over Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist, also led former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to drop his membership from the board of NEOM, a "smart city" project in the kingdom. "Given current events, I am suspending my participation on the NEOM board," Moniz said in a statement Wednesday, first reported by Axios. "Going forward, my engagement with the advisory board will depend on learning all the facts about Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance over the coming days and weeks."

It's worth noting that the Trump administration has a couple of important asks in front of the Saudis: It's counting on the kingdom to maintain steady supplies of crude oil on the global market in order to temper price spikes once the White House reimposes sanctions on Iran; and Energy Secretary Rick Perry has been pressing to secure a civil nuclear trade agreement with Saudi Arabia. DOE declined to comment on whether Khashoggi's situation had affected its initiatives.

'Sweep it under the rug': POLITICO's Nahal Toosi takes a look at the growing worries that the White House will not confront the Saudis here.

#### THE WHITE HOUSE

**REPORT: ZINKE CONSIDERED FOR U.N.:** Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is among the names being considered to replace outgoing U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, who resigned this week, according to a Fox News report based on two senior officials within the Trump administration. As POLITICO previously reported, Dina Powell, a Goldman Sachs executive and former deputy national security adviser, is the top candidate to replace Haley, but the White House has signaled it's open to others. Fox News reported that President Donald Trump was set to meet with Zinke on Wednesday about the U.N. role and other issues. In the Oval Office on Wednesday, Trump told reporters, "We like Dina" but are also "looking at others" for the role. For what it's worth, Interior told ME it doesn't comment "on conversations that may or may not have occurred between the secretary and the president."

Not a fan: Alaska Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski seemed cool to the prospect of Zinke leaving to become U.N. ambassador even as she expressed confidence in Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt leading the agency. "If you now have the secretary leave, you kind of have to start all over," she told reporters. But she praised Bernhardt for "working round the clock" and said "he's doing a good job there."

#### ON THE HILL

**E15 OPPONENTS HAVE AN ALLY IN KAVANAUGH:** Trump's promise to boost ethanol sales will have to survive an inevitable court challenge once EPA formally issues an E15 waiver sometime next spring, and the oil industry does not think the agency has the legal authority it needs to follow through, Pro's Eric Wolff reported Wednesday. On that front, they appear to be in agreement with newly sworn-in Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who offered his views in a 2012 case over a partial waiver. The case was dismissed on procedural grounds, but Kavanaugh wrote a dissenting opinion arguing that EPA was misinterpreting the Clean Air Act. "On the merits, I conclude that the E15 waiver violates the statute," he wrote in *Grocery Manufacturers Association v. EPA*. "The waiver might be good policy; if so, Congress has the power to enact a new law permitting E15. But under the statute as currently written, EPA lacks authority for the waiver."

Back to the Hill? While legislative action has largely fizzled this year around reforming the Renewable Fuel Standard, oil refiners' allies on Capitol Hill say they are not giving up the fight. "We're still talking," Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) told reporters Wednesday. "We think we need a permanent solution and I also think there's a high likelihood there will be litigation, so we think a legislative solution would be more appropriate." A spokesman for Rep. John Shimkus, who has been leading the House effort on reform, said Shimkus hopes to get a draft bill out later this year.

NOT AFRAID: Murkowski's GOP colleagues have her back against any retaliation over her vote against Kavanaugh, and she said she isn't afraid of Trump's threat that she will "never recover" from that vote. "There are consequences to every vote that we take and I accept that, but I also cannot be driven out of fear of a tweet, of a reprimand, of a cross word," she told reporters. She smiled when asked if she'll run again — "I don't have to make that decision for four years" — but quickly added: "I know Alaska's political terrain better than [Trump] does."

PIPE DREAMS: Congress' approval this week of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 S. 3021 (115) provides some of the most significant updates to the country's drinking water management in two decades, but it's unlikely to fix some of the nation's most pressing water problems on its own. The bill will give lawmakers a major achievement to tout back home ahead of midterms, Annie reports, especially in districts grappling with drinking water problems, but some argue the bill is just a step in the right direction on solving water infrastructure problems.

DOJ NOMINEE MOVES CLOSER: The Senate will vote at 12:10 p.m. on the nomination of Jeffrey Clark to be assistant attorney general in charge of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division, following a 53-44 cloture vote on Wednesday. Trump first nominated Clark, who is backed by industry groups, in June 2017.

McNAMEE ENDGAME: Republican senators on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee are hoping to swiftly confirm FERC nominee Bernard McNamee before year's end, in an effort to return the commission to full strength, Pro's Anthony Adragna reports. Democrats, meanwhile, warn of a coming battle over the selection, as they remain worried that adding McNamee to FERC will politicize the commission.

NEWS TO ME: Trump suggested aboard Air Force One on Tuesday he'd received "expedited approval" for a Texas pipeline project, but Cornyn told ME he wasn't sure which one the president was referring to even as he suggested more pipeline capacity is needed. "I do know they're flaring off and burning natural gas in the Permian Basin because they don't have the pipeline capacity to send it to market," he said. "I'm not familiar to what he was referring to, but there is a shortage of capacity to be sure."

#### INSIDE THE AGENCIES

WHEELER HEADS TO CALI: Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler is in California's Central Valley today, where he'll appear at a press event with Republican Rep. Jeff Denham, who is facing one of the tightest re-election fights in the country. Denham has asked Wheeler to use EPA's authority to overturn a proposal by California's State Water Resources Board that would require more water to be reserved in key rivers for the benefit of endangered fish species and the detriment of farmers who dominate Denham's district.

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, STAN? Michigan Democrats who were on the frontlines of the Flint lead contamination crisis are pressing EPA to account for the recent dismissal of the head of the agency's Office of Children's Health Protection. In a letter being sent to Wheeler this morning, Sens. Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow, and Rep. Dan Kildee ask EPA to explain Ruth Etzel's abrupt removal as head of the office and how the office will operate now. "Going forward, we need to ensure we have a strong national infrastructure to prevent a scenario like the Flint water crisis from ever happening again, and the Office of Children's Health Protection is key to this strategy," the lawmakers write. An EPA spokesman has said Etzel was placed on administrative leave while the agency investigates allegations about her leadership of the office.

WHEELER ADDS 5 TO ADVISORY PANEL: Wheeler appointed five new members to the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee, which advises the administrator on NAAQS issues: Mark Frampton, of the University of Rochester Medical Center; Sabine Lange, from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; Timothy Lewis, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Corey Masuca, of the Jefferson County Department of Health in Alabama; and Utah Department of Environmental Quality's Steven Packham.

#### QUICK HITS

- "How Bloomberg embeds green warriors in blue-state governments," RealClear Investigations.
- "Regs chief likely on short list for D.C. Circuit bench," E&E News.
- "More than 1,500 Interior employees removed or reprimanded for harassment, misconduct," The Hill.
- "James Murdoch in line to replace Elon Musk as Tesla chair," Financial Times.
- "Trump administration seeks to deploy earthquake sensors faster," The Wall Street Journal.
- "Toxic red tide could sicken people as Hurricane Michael pushes it ashore," Bloomberg.\

## E&E: Wheeler bumps more academics from advisory panel

<https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2018/10/11/stories/1060102327>

Sean Reilly- Thursday, October 11, 2018

EPA acting chief Andrew Wheeler yesterday dramatically reshuffled the lineup of a key air quality advisory panel with what he called "highly qualified" new appointees drawn mainly from state and local regulatory agencies.

But in naming five new members to the seven-member Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee, Wheeler also displaced several academic researchers, prompting accusations that he's trying to influence the outcome of a closely watched review of EPA's air quality standards for particulate matter.

"You don't have the expertise, period," said Chris Zarba, who headed the EPA office that oversaw the committee's work before retiring early this year. Zarba is now part of a network made up largely of former agency employees opposed to the Trump administration's environmental policies.

The committee, usually referred to by its acronym, CASAC, is charged with advising EPA during legally required reviews of the standards for particulate matter, ozone and four other common pollutants targeted by the Clean Air Act. With the appointments announced late yesterday, all seven members have been named by either Wheeler or Scott Pruitt, his predecessor as EPA chief.

The new appointees, culled from the ranks of three dozen nominees:

- Mark Frampton, professor emeritus in medicine, University of Rochester Medical Center's Pulmonary and Critical Care division.
- Sabine Lange, section manager, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's toxicology division.
- Tim Lewis, supervisory research ecologist, Army Corps of Engineers.
- Corey Masuca, principal air pollution control engineer, Jefferson County (Ala.) Department of Health.
- Steven Packham, inhalation toxicologist, Utah Department of Environmental Quality.
- Four of the five are replacements for members whose terms expired last month; a fifth takes the place of Larry Wolk, another Pruitt appointee who has since left his post as executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for a job in the private sector. The committee's chairman remains Tony Cox, a Colorado consultant named to the post last year whose clients have included industry groups like the American Petroleum Institute.

In the news release announcing the appointments, EPA said the committee "will serve as the body to review key scientific assessments for the ozone and particulate matter" standards. Under a fast-track schedule set earlier this year, both those reviews are set for completion in late 2020.

Among administration critics, the release's wording prompted speculation that EPA is disbanding a separate 24-member panel, made up almost entirely of academic researchers, that is charged with providing additional expertise during the assessment of the particulate matter standards.

As of this morning, however, several panel members said they had not gotten any official notification of such a development, and the list of panel members remained posted on EPA's website. Asked whether the agency is in fact abolishing the panel, EPA spokesman John Konkus in an email repeated the language in the news release.

The new appointments appear to reflect the impact of a Pruitt directive imposed last fall to guide the selection of members for CASAC and other EPA advisory committees.

That directive set a loose goal of expanding the ranks of members who come from state, local and tribal governments. More controversially, it also barred current EPA grant recipients from serving on agency advisory committees. Pruitt also effectively ended a tradition of reappointing first-term CASAC members to a second three-year term. Three of the academic scientists who were not reappointed fell into that category. One of them, Lianne Sheppard, a biostatistics professor at the University of Washington, is a plaintiff in one of three pending lawsuits that challenge the ban on service by grant recipients.

The appointments could also show the influence of EPA deputy air chief Clint Woods. Before going to work for EPA last year, Woods headed the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies, which mainly represents regulators from the South and West. Lange, Masuca and Packham all work for agencies that are association members.

Asked in an email this morning whether he had weighed in during the selection process, Woods referred the question to Konkus.

"EPA went through the standard vetting process for interested applicants that included input from a range of offices at multiple levels," Konkus wrote.

## Think Progress: Wheeler's first big science test shows alignment with Pruitt agenda on EPA board appointments

<https://thinkprogress.org/wheeler-science-pruitt-epa-panel-be0a783aa55b/>

OCT 11, 2018, 1:54 PM

Acting Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator Andrew Wheeler appears to be continuing in the vein of his predecessor Scott Pruitt, after the official largely opted out of appointing scientists to an advisory panel on air pollution. Instead, Wheeler seemingly favored candidates holding viewpoints in line with the Trump administration.

The EPA announced on Wednesday five new appointees to the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), the panel that advises on U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The advisory committee provides advice on air quality criteria, in addition to adding NAAQS or revising pre-existing standards.

Former EPA administrator Scott Pruitt came under fire for his overhauling of EPA advisory committees, with scientists and green groups accusing the official of stacking the panels with industry insiders rather than field experts. And many are watching to see how Wheeler will handle appointments to those committees, with the acting administrator now in a position to shape EPA science policy.

But while Wheeler has largely moved away from Pruitt's secretive and scandal-ridden image, the official's appointees indicate his approach is likely to be more of the same when it comes to policy.

Independent academic researchers traditionally make up the bulk of appointees to EPA advisory panels, but only one academic scientist made the cut on Wednesday: pulmonologist Mark Frampton, a professor at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

Frampton has conducted research on air pollution, the core issue on which he will be advising. But some of his peers come with more controversial resumes.

EPA's 'secret science' rule faces outpouring of opposition during emotionally-charged hearing

One is Toxicologist Sabine Lange, who works with the Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Lange has historically argued that reducing limitations on ground-level ozone would have no impact on public health. Ground-level ozone, or smog, is linked to asthma aggravation, reduced lung function, and severe respiratory issues.

Lange, however, co-authored an assessment published in an environmental management industry magazine rejecting the connections between ozone pollution and its health impacts in 2015, alongside Michael E. Honeycutt, the director of the Toxicology Division of the TCEQ.

Honeycutt, who for years accused the EPA of overstating the risks posed by toxic chemicals, was tapped in 2017 by President Donald Trump to lead the EPA's Science Advisory Board despite outcry from Texas environmental advocates.

Also on Wheeler's list is Steven Packham, a toxicologist at Utah's Department of Environmental Quality. Packham has previously said there is no direct data linking atmospheric particulate matter (PM) with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers (PM2.5, or "fine particulates") to lung-related health impacts.

Scientists, however, have linked PM2.5 to lung cancer and other deadly health problems.

Packham also wrote to the EPA official accepting recommendation letters for the Science Advisory Board in 2016 to recommend Honeycutt for the Science Advisory Board.

"I urge you to accept the nomination of Michael Honeycutt. He is eminently qualified by virtue of his scientific knowledge and experience as a highly respected researcher, leader, and regulator," wrote Packham on July 8 of that year. "He also has a talent for resolving issues without contention with compromising adherence to sound scientific principles and methods."

Additional appointees include Corey Masuca, of the Jefferson County Department of Health in Alabama, and Timothy Lewis, an aquatic ecology expert with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Masuca has historically been among the Birmingham officials tasked with addressing the city's ongoing ozone pollution issues — Birmingham is typically listed as one of the worst in the nation for air quality.

Planned shake-up at EPA would make scientists more vulnerable to political interference, critics say  
A pillar of Pruitt's tenure was the former administrator's efforts to "streamline and standardize" policy development processes within the EPA. That broader approach has meant sweeping changes and proposals within the agency.

Under Pruitt, for example, the EPA proposed limiting the use of scientific evidence sourced from confidential data, despite push-back from health and environmental advocates. Moreover, EPA science advisory board researchers who have historically received agency grants have been accused of having conflicts of interest. Their replacements, however, have largely consisted of industry insiders and conservative voices.

Little has changed since Wheeler took over in July. On Wednesday, along with the new CASAC appointees, the EPA announced an end to the Particulate Matter Review panel, which provided scientific expertise on air pollution. Instead, CASAC's seven members alone will evaluate the threats posed by PM to public health.

In a statement Wednesday, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) blasted that move and hit out at the "EPA's political leadership" including Wheeler.

"They are determined to weaken the safeguards that protect us from hazardous air pollution, regardless of the evidence," said Gretchen Goldman, research director of the Center for Science and Democracy with UCS. "The consequences are enormous, and this represents a fundamental betrayal of the mission of the agency and the laws the EPA is supposed to enforce."

This week's move to streamline the office comes after a series of other recent changes. Last month, the EPA announced that it would downgrade the science adviser's office, which is meant to advise the EPA administrator on the use of science in environmental policies.

The head of the EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection, Ruth Etzel, has also been placed on leave for unknown reasons, another indicator that the agency under Wheeler is increasingly moving away from roles that emphasize the link between health and the environment.

In a letter sent Wednesday, Democrats asked the EPA to explain Etzel's removal, while noting that her office is key to preventing future tragedies like the ongoing water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

## Solar Industry: EPA Names 10 'Green Power' Leaders

<https://solarindustrymag.com/epa-names-10-green-power-leaders/>

Posted by Betsy Lillian -October 11, 2018

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced its 18th annual Green Power Leadership Awards, recognizing organizations, programs and individuals that significantly advance the development of the nation's green power sources.

The winners for each of the three award categories are as follows:

### Green Power Partner of the Year

Microsoft Corp. (Redmond, Wash.) increased its green power use by 36% in the past year and is on track to reach its goal to increase the number of data centers powered by local, directly connected renewable generation facilities up to 50% by the end of 2018.

### Direct Project Engagement

- Jackson Family Wines (Santa Rosa, Calif.) procures nearly 37 million kWh of green power, 9 million of which is on-site solar generation, for 100% of its annual electricity usage.
- Michigan State University (East Lansing, Mich.) hosts the largest solar photovoltaic carport system in the U.S. through a long-term power purchase agreement (PPA) and operates an anaerobic digestion system that turns dairy farm and dining hall food waste into renewable energy.
- The Procter & Gamble Co. (Cincinnati) procures 743 million kWh of green power annually by using multiple supply options, including an on-site biomass PPA, a financial wind PPA, wind renewable energy certificate (REC) contracts, and on-site solar generation.
- T-Mobile US Inc. (Bellevue, Wash.) has committed to 100% green power (by 2021) and signed a financial wind PPA for 625 million kWh annually – the largest wind power investment to date made by a wireless company.
- University of California (Oakland, Calif.) has increased its voluntary green power use by 40% system-wide; completed 12 new on-site solar projects; hosts more than 40 MW of on-site solar capacity with photovoltaic systems at every campus; and has a goal to be the first major research university system to achieve carbon neutrality by 2025.
- Excellence in Green Power Use

Anheuser-Busch Cos. LLC (St. Louis) procures more than 727 million kWh of green power for 55% of its annual electricity use, which includes a 15-year financial PPA with a wind farm that generates nearly 603 million kWh annually.

- Equinix Inc. (Redwood City, Calif.) has committed to a goal of 100% renewable energy use across its global footprint and achieved a 42% green power use growth rate year-over-year.
- Google Inc. (Mountain View, Calif.) has expanded its green power procurement to 53% of its electric load in the U.S. by using various green power products and supply types, including on-site landfill gas and long-term PPAs.
- Starbucks Coffee Co. (Seattle) has increased its green power use by more than 81 million kWh last year and more than 474 million kWh since 2014.

"The 2018 Green Power Leadership Award winners have proven real leadership, demonstrating to American businesses that, through their investments, they can together not only grow America's renewable energy market, but also reduce air emissions and protect the environment," says Bill Wehrum, the EPA's assistant administrator for air and radiation.

In response to the company's award, Ingrid De Ryck, vice president of procurement and sustainability at Anheuser-Busch, states, "Sustainability is fundamental to the way we operate. It is not just part of our business, but it is our business. We strive to build a better world across all areas of our business and throughout our value chain and are thrilled to have these efforts recognized by the EPA as part of their nationwide Green Power Leadership Awards."



Anheuser-Busch has committed to sourcing 100% of all purchased electricity from renewable energy by 2025.

“We are more than halfway to achieving our 2025 goal of securing 100 percent of purchased electricity from renewable sources,” adds De Ryck. “Helping to grow the renewable electricity market is not only good for the environment, it’s a strategic business move – a healthy environment is crucial to the brewing process. We’ve been a committed steward of the environment for the past 165 years and look forward to continuing to lead by example for the next 165 years and beyond.”

## The Hill: GOP chairman: FEMA has enough money for Hurricane Michael

BY ALEXANDER BOLTON - 10/11/18 03:29 PM EDT

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) says Congress does not need to pass a disaster relief package for victims of Hurricane Michael immediately because the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has sufficient funding.

Frelinghuysen's statement reflects the views of other GOP lawmakers who say a disaster relief package won't pass before the election and may even wait until next year.

"The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) currently has sufficient funds for immediate disaster response thanks to prior action from Congress," Frelinghuysen said in a statement.

He said the Appropriations Committee continuously monitors funding levels and disaster response requirements and vowed Congress would pass additional funding if necessary.

"Should the need arise, my committee is prepared to act quickly," he said. "Our thoughts are with those affected by this and other hurricanes, and we urge all in the storm's continued path to stay safe."

A GOP aide said FEMA currently has \$25 billion available in its accounts.

A spokesperson for Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), who has been in Florida this week surveying the damage, did not respond to a request for comment.

GOP leaders said it will take a while to determine what if any additional assistance is needed from Congress.

The damage from the storm is projected to cost \$30 billion or more.

"I think they need to do an assessment first and we'll assess that as soon as they're ready," said Senate Republican Whip John Cornyn (Texas).

"It's all going to be determined what the needs are and the states are probably going to give us some direction on that," said Senate Republican Conference Chairman John Thune (R-S.D.).]

# Hurricane Michael Live Updates: A Trail of Destruction in the Florida Panhandle

By Richard Fausset, Patricia Mazzei and Alan Blinder- Oct. 11, 2018

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. — Search-and-rescue teams rushed on Thursday to reach communities that Hurricane Michael leveled, hoping to find survivors of the powerful storm after its rampage through the Florida Panhandle and beyond left buildings collapsed and splintered, hospitals damaged, roads and water systems compromised and more than a million homes and businesses without electricity.

Although it was clear by afternoon that the storm had caused widespread damage, some areas remained largely cut off, and the authorities were trying to deploy rescuers by helicopter and boat. At least five people were killed, and with the death toll expected to rise, the Panhandle and counties to the north were a vast, staggered disaster zone.

“This is a very dense part of the state, so it’s going to be a lot of work to get to everybody,” Gov. Rick Scott of Florida said. “But we will get to everybody.”

Here are the latest developments:

- At least four deaths were linked to the storm in Gadsden County, west of Tallahassee, according to Lt. Anglie Hightower, a spokeswoman for the sheriff’s office. The victims included a man who died when a tree crashed down on his home in Greensboro.
- An 11-year-old girl, Sarah Radney, was killed on Wednesday when a carport was torn away and was sent hurtling into the modular home she was in, said Chad Smith, the coroner of Seminole County, Ga. “She was sitting right next to her grandmother,” said Mr. Smith, who described the girl’s death as a “horrible accident.”
- Emergency officials rushed to evacuate more than 300 patients from storm-damaged hospitals in Panama City. In total, four hospitals and 11 nursing facilities were closed in Florida. A nursing facility in Georgia was also closed.
- Much of the coast of the Florida Panhandle, including parts of Panama City and Mexico Beach, was left in ruins. The area is dotted with small, rural communities, some of them among the poorest in the state. Evacuation was difficult. Read more about how the storm was hard on people without the means to evacuate.
- At 11 a.m. on Thursday, Michael was about 25 miles south of Greensboro, N.C., heading northeast with sustained wind speeds of up to 50 miles per hour. Now a tropical storm, it is moving relatively quickly, at 23 m.p.h., and is expected to speed up as it crosses the Carolinas and blows out to sea by early Friday. Click on the map below to see the storm’s projected path.

Hurricane Michael Made Landfall. We’re Tracking the Storm and Its Impact.  
The storm is the worst ever to hit the Florida Panhandle.

Oct. 8, 2018

- More than 1.1 million homes and businesses were without electricity on Thursday, state agencies and utility companies said.
- “The big problem with this hurricane was the tremendous power,” President Trump said on Thursday, adding that “we’ve not seen destruction like that for a long time.”
- Michael took the nation by surprise, intensifying rapidly from a tropical storm to a major hurricane in just two days and leaving little time for preparations. Read more about why it strengthened so quickly here.

Image

Debris outside a hospital in Panama City, Fla., on Thursday. Credit Eric Thayer for The New York Times

Mexico Beach was ground zero when the storm hit

Ted Carranza could only watch with horror and wonder as Hurricane Michael lifted the houses all around him in the small town of Mexico Beach, Fla., then spun them around and dropped them.

"It was insane," Mr. Carranza said Thursday from the town where the storm had crossed onto land a day earlier. It was a city in ruin. All around him, in places where there were once houses, now there were mere piles of lumber, junked home furnishings, mangled roofing, fishing rods, ceiling fans, sheets, clothing, bottles.

"These were all block and stucco houses — gone," said Tom Bailey, 66, a former mayor of the city, gesturing to a flat beachside plain riddled with junk piles and a few bent trees.

The roads became passable into town on Thursday, and it became evident that few communities had suffered more. Known for its sport fishing, the city of about 2,000 permanent residents swells to as many as 14,000 in July, and is known for having a relaxed, small-town feel compared to the brash tourist strips of Panama City Beach or the tony nearby beach developments like Alys Beach or Seaside.

But Mexico Beach is now a splintered, flattened wreck, with expensive boats pushed up halfway onto land, piers and docks destroyed, and the main street through town piled with the jumbled remains of permanent homes and vacation places.

"The mother of all bombs doesn't do any more damage than this," said Mr. Bailey, a retired U.S. Army major, as he pushed his bicycle down the main drag, marveling at the damage.

Officials were not allowing visitors to drive into town, as the roads were barely passable, but convoys of military trucks and Humvees were moving in, while hard-hatted search and rescue crews moved door to door — although often there were no doors — to search for survivors and bodies.

In the late morning, two men from the New Orleans Fire Department could be seen searching the second story of a raised home, the face of which had been sheared off by the wind. From the ground level, the rescue workers looked like dolls in a dollhouse.

Mr. Bailey was asked if there was anything that could be done to help.

"Yeah," he said, pushing off on his bicycle, "turn back the clock two days."

Damaged hospitals are evacuating patients

Bay Medical Center Sacred Heart, a 300-bed hospital in the heart of Panama City, Fla., was a tumultuous mess on Thursday morning. Hurricane Michael had strafed the center, breaking windows, damaging roofs and stripping off the outsides of some buildings. Signage was strewn in the streets. Doctors, nurses and staff members wandered outside, some crying, some looking for cell service.

Hurricane Michael brought down trees and power lines in Tallahassee, Fla. Credit Johnny Milano for The New York Times  
Bay Medical said in a statement that about 200 patients would be evacuated, including 39 intensive care patients who will be transferred first, to hospitals outside the affected area. About 1,500 people had taken shelter in the hospital, the statement said.

The hospital was in poor condition to take in patients. Staff members said the hospital had partial electricity from its generators; there was no water and the toilets were filling up. Windows were broken. One staff member said that the fourth floor was flooded. She had tied plastic bags over her shoes and the legs of her scrubs.

Dr. Brian Roake, the head of the anesthesiology department, was among those who rode out the hurricane in the hospital. "It was like hell," he said.

The photographers Gabriella Angotti-Jones, Scott McIntyre, Johnny Milano and Eric Thayer are on the ground in Florida covering the storm for The New York Times. See their images [here](#).

'Extensive damage' at an Air Force base

Tyndall Air Force Base, which straddles a narrow spit of land jutting out into the Gulf, a dozen miles south of Panama City, "sustained extensive damage," a post on the base's Facebook page said.

Winds topping 130 miles an hour knocked down trees, felled power lines, tore roofs from buildings, and ripped a static display of an F-15 fighter jet at the base entrance from its foundation, pitching it into the air and tipping it upside down.

Fortunately, "there have been no injuries reported on Tyndall at this time," the Facebook post said.

The base, which sits just nine feet above sea level, is home to a series of hangars and a runway, as well as tree-lined neighborhoods for about 600 Air Force personnel. The base hosts a number of jets, including F-22 Raptor stealth fighters, which cost well over \$100 million each. The base commander ordered all jets to fly to inland bases earlier in the week.

The roof of the base's largest hangar, which has been used to store jets during weaker storms, was skinned down to its steel rafters, revealing at least three small planes inside, covered in debris. Though the video did not reveal large amounts of standing water near the flight line, it showed roofs shorn off several other buildings surrounding the hangar, garage doors punched in, and cars flipped over.

Hurricane Michael's Destruction, Viewed From Above

This footage taken from a helicopter shows how Hurricane Michael's powerful winds wiped out many parts of Mexico Beach, Fla. Published Oct. 11, 2018. Credit: Image by WXchasing

It was unclear Thursday if the runway was usable. Base officials said they were assessing damage. It was not known when personnel would be able to return.

Other Air Force bases along the coast, as well as the Navy base in Panama City, have resumed limited operations.

[Travel remains snarled in Hurricane Michael's wake.]

Emergency crews are heading into the hardest-hit areas

Governor Scott said Thursday that Michael had left a wide trail of devastation, and that the authorities had turned their immediate focus to rescue efforts.

"We are deploying a massive wave of response, and those efforts are already underway," Mr. Scott said. "Help is coming by air, land and sea."

Senator Marco Rubio of Florida said he had heard from the local authorities who described extensive damage. "These are not people prone to hyperbole," Mr. Rubio said on CNN. "Panama City is catastrophic damage. Someone told me, 'Mexico Beach is gone.'"

The other areas of greatest concern were the eastern parts of Panama City, Apalachicola and around Tyndall Air Force Base, said Brock Long, the administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Mr. Long said that he was equally concerned about communities in southwest Georgia, which received Category 2 wind speeds, because of the large number of mobile homes in that part of the state. "We are always worried about trees falling on manufactured homes and mobile homes," he said.

[How a storm death is counted can vary from state to state, and even county to county.]

Early reports suggested significant damage. Gov. Nathan Deal of Georgia said 450,000 homes and businesses were without power in the state, and that 35 hospitals or nursing homes were without electricity and operating with generators.

"Right now, the main focus is going to be on debris removal so that power line trucks and repair crews can access the areas that are without power," Mr. Deal said at the State Capitol in Atlanta.

Mr. Long expected the search-and-rescue process to be challenging, given all the fallen trees, debris and downed power lines. He worried that the number of people killed in the storm would rise once crews reached places where people did not evacuate.

"People do not live to tell the tale about storm surge," he said.

Florida officials also pleaded with residents to stay off the roads as crews tried to clear debris and emergency workers were scrambling to hard-hit areas. They asked people to avoid downed power lines, and not to drive through flooded areas. They urged residents and visitors to keep emergency phone lines open and, in some areas, to boil their water or use bottled water. They told them to position generators at least 15 feet from homes, and to stay indoors.

Debris and damaged belongings from Hurricane Florence in Lumberton, N.C., on Thursday. Tropical Storm Michael will also pass by the area. Credit Logan R. Cyrus for The New York Times

A missed call, and then nothing. A sister worries about her family.

Like many people with family in the hurricane-ravaged area, Megan McCall is trying to reach a family member.

At 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Ms. McCall missed a call from her brother, Jeff McCall, who was trying to ride out Hurricane Michael with his family in Alford, Fla., about 40 miles north of Panama City.

She has not heard from him since.

Ms. McCall, who lives in Jacksonville, tried calling back. At first the phone would ring, but now it is dead.

Before she had missed the call, a family friend who spoke to her brother said the situation was dire: a three-inch crack in the wall was letting water into the house. Mr. McCall, 43, was in the basement, with his wife, Kristi McCall, their 6-year-old daughter, her 10-year-old son and her parents.

Now, Megan McCall, 30, is trying to reach someone who might be able to check on the family at the home on the edge of Compass Lake.

"All of the roads in the area where my brother was staying are impassable," Ms. McCall said. "I have no idea what condition the house is in now." A neighbor sent her a picture of the home, which showed the roof still on the building.

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Ms. McCall said she had considered calling the police but did not want to create a panic.

"I'm just glued to my phone hoping that somebody's post leads me to something that leads me to something that leads me to somebody that has access down there," she said.

The Carolinas, hit by Florence, are also dealing with Michael  
After a ferocious wallop of the Florida Panhandle, the tropical storm that was once Hurricane Michael slogged up through the Carolinas on Thursday, states that have had a lifetime's worth of bad weather in the last few years. Disastrous floods swamped South Carolina in 2015, then Matthew hit in 2016, then Florence in September, now this.

"For North Carolina, Michael isn't as bad as Florence, but it adds unwelcomed insult to injury, so we must be on alert," Gov. Roy Cooper said in a statement on Thursday.

Michael is taking a very different track through the Carolinas; it is headed up through the west-central parts of the states, drenching mid-state cities and mountain towns — there was a minor landslide in far western North Carolina — while to a large degree sparing the eastern stretches that were inundated a month ago.

Officials in places like Wilmington, N.C., reduced to a powerless island for days after Florence, are using terms like "inconvenience" to describe the potential effects of Michael. Meanwhile, officials in Appalachian counties are bracing for problems they had expected but largely dodged during Florence.

"The ground is already inundated, it's been a very wet time," said Will Holt, the emergency services director in mountainous Watauga County, N.C., where firefighters have already had to rescue people from flooded areas. "The wind is projected to pick back up as well."